

Mansfield Conservation Commission
Minutes of the Meeting
July 17, 2002

Present: Denise Burchsted, Robert Dahn (Chair), Jennifer Kaufman, Quentin Kessel, Lanse Minkler, Mary Rogers, and Frank Trainor.
Absent: John Silander, and Robert Thorson.
Town Staff: Grant Meitzler, Inland Wetland Agent.
Guests: Tom Callahan and Lisa Dahn.

- 1) The meeting was called to order at 7:35 P.M.
- 2) The minutes of the June 20, 2001 meeting were approved unanimously.

3) Old Business.

Fenton River water levels: Kessel reported a maximum depth of 4 or 5 inches at the crossing by pumping station A and remarked that the river is under stress. Dahn remarked that a number of streams are low at this time this year.

- 4) It was agreed to change the order of business and to discuss the Maplewoods Subdivision, W1186, and any UConn issues, in that order.

5) PZC referral, Maplewoods Subdivision: Kessel reviewed the previous evening's discussion at the OSPC meeting and remarked that Wetherell was preparing recommendations to the PZC on behalf of the OSPC. Based on Kessel's review, Kessel moved and Kaufman seconded a tentative endorsement of the Wetherell/OSPC statement. Kaufman will circulate an email copy of the OSPC statement to CC members and determine by email whether the CC will be fully endorsing it.

As a result of an extended CC discussion and review of the subdivision maps the following points were made for forwarding to the PZC:

- a.) The proposed open space dedication appears to be of little value to either the local residents or other potential visitors. It is not very accessible and contains a large percentage of wetlands. It was questioned whether the percentage of wetlands was large enough to preclude acceptance of this land as open space under the Town's new regulations. A much preferable choice for open space would include the steep slope south of Lots 17 and 23. This would be adjacent to more actively used Town-owned land and would provide buffering for the Cedar Swamp and Town trails in that area.
- b) The CC believes in preserving stone walls, especially historic ones, whenever possible. On Lot 17 the historic curved stone wall was not depicted on the map and it was questioned whether, or not, other important walls were omitted from the maps submitted.

c) The Natural Diversity Data Base, showing species of special concern includes nearly all of Lots 17 and 23.

6) IWA application W1186 - Brian McCarthy - Mansfield City Road. Map date, 6/24/02. This is a request for approval of a 2 lot subdivision with work on one of the lots being in a regulated area. Dahn recused himself and appointed Minkler temporary chair.

Lisa Dahn presented a 7/16/02 letter written by Margaret A. Thomas of the Board of Directors of the Community Children's Center which was addressed to various Town bodies (Attachment # 1, 2 pages, the letter and a page with two photographs). The photographs show the top of an underground gas storage tank and the other abandoned oil/fuel pumps on the portion of the site adjacent to the Children's Center holdings. The letter states that the tank represents a dangerous threat to the quality of drinking water in the area and that the site should be cleaned up, in accordance with State laws and regulations. The letter further requests that any subdivision approval be conditional on this environmental cleanup and a subsequent evaluation testifying to the success of that cleanup. Kaufman moved and Burchstead seconded, that the CC endorse the Thomas letter. The motion passed unanimously.

The CC agreed that it would not be appropriate to make a judgment on the IWA issues at this point. It was felt that the developer had not included the oil/gas tank and equipment description and location on the map and that therefore the application was not complete.

Dahn returned as chair.

7) New Business.

a) The communications regarding the University of Connecticut were reviewed and Tom Callahan answered several questions and made comments. Specifically he wished to be assured that when the CC's Fenton River Level A mapping report was complete that it should include the letter from LBG, the consultants doing the study for the University, responding to our earlier comments.

The order of business on the agenda was resumed:

b) Torrey Boundary Marking update: Dahn and Kessel expressed a preference for doing this task in late October when the leaves would be off the trees.

c) Lands of Unique Value Study Update: Minkler reported that there had been no more meetings on this.

d) Town Water Study (Milone and McBroom): There appears to be nothing new on this issue.

e) Fenton River Level A Aquifer Mapping: The promised comments from the subcommittee of Kessel, Silander and Thorson were unavailable.

f) Plan of Conservation and Development: The role of the CC was discussed and the question was raised as to whether the Minuitti Lands of Unique Value Study would be useful in updating the priority matrix developed by the CC for earlier Plans for the ratings Mansfield features and lands. Burchstead indicated that she will contact Greg Padick about serving on a plan of C&D committee on behalf of the CC.

g) Green Valley Institute Protecting Family Farm and Forests Workshop. It was agreed to co-sponsored this September 26, 2002 session with the Willington Conservation Commission. Minkler may be willing to assist with the coordination. Kessel would be willing to speak with his neighbors regarding the event.

h) IWA referrals (also W1186, above).

W1185 – Mansfield Retirement Community – Glen Ridge Development. This application is for the replacement of a unit with minor site changes. Kessel moved and Trainor seconded that there should be no significant negative impact on the wetlands as long as the sedimentation and erosion control barriers described in the application and/or shown on the map are in place during the construction and removed after the site is stabilized. The motion passed with 6 voting for the motion and 1 abstention. The commission suggested that it would be desirable to move the building a bit further away from the wetlands if it were possible.

i) It was agreed that the CACIWC should be paid for the coming year's membership.

8) The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Quentin Kessel
Acting Secretary